

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE

**Meeting held at Council Offices, Gernon Road, Letchworth Garden City
on 7 March 2007 at 7.30p.m.**

MINUTES

PRESENT: *Councillors: M. Paterson (Chairman), Simon Bloxham (Vice-Chairman), Monica Bloxham, J.M. Cunningham, Melissa Davey, Lorna Kercher, David Levett and Elliot Needham.*

IN ATTENDANCE: *Patrick Candler (Head of Community Development and Cultural Services), Mary Caldwell (Planning Control and Conservation Manager), Martin Fletcher (Letchworth Garden City Town Centre Manager) Tim Hobman (Committee & Member Services Officer).*

The Chairman welcomed all those present to the meeting.

98. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Gary Grindal, T.W. Hone, David Kearns and Mrs Lynda Needham.

99. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

With the agreement of the Committee the Chairman moved Item 9 – Champion News and Item 10 – development and Area Visioning Budgets to the first two items of the agenda, followed by the agenda as listed.

The Chairman informed the Committee of the progress regarding the Lottery Application for the restoration of Howard Park and Gardens, stating that it was resolved at the meeting of Cabinet on the 27 February 2007 for a Stage One Lottery application to be submitted for the scheme

100. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2007 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Chairman.

101. NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was submitted for consideration by the Committee.

102. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Councillor Michael Paterson declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 9 – Champion News – in view of the fact that he is a member of the Arts Centre. Councillor Paterson remained in the meeting for the duration of this item.

103. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation at the meeting.

104. LETCHWORTH GARDEN CITY TOWN CENTRE MANAGER

The Letchworth Garden City Town Centre Manager made a PowerPoint presentation, which advised the Committee of the development of Letchworth Town Centre Partnership Ltd.

The presentation outlined the company format, the role of the board of directors and the proposed management structure of the company. The presentation also advised the Committee of the near and long term future of the company and the services, activities and events that the company would be providing.

RESOLVED:

- (1) That the presentation be noted.
- (2) That the Letchworth Garden City Town Centre Manager be thanked for the presentation.

REASON FOR DECISION: To update the Members of Letchworth Area Committee of the recent progress of Letchworth Town Centre Partnership Ltd.

105. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

RESOLVED: To determine the applications as set out in the report of the Head of Planning and Building Control as submitted to the Committee in the following schedule:

SCHEDULE

	Reference Number	Description of Development and location	Decision
1.	06/02718/1 HH	23 Elderfield, Letchworth Garden City , SG6 4BP Two storey rear extension and replacement outbuilding for No 21 Elderfield.	GRANTED (see (a) below)
2.	06/02809/ 1HH	35 Chatterton, Letchworth Garden city, SG6 2JY Two storey side extension.	GRANTED As per report

- (a) It was resolved that planning permission be granted subject to an informative being attached to the decision notice advising the applicant that during the construction works no damage shall be caused to the grass verge and no contractor's or other vehicles shall be parked on the verge in order to protect the visual amenities of the area.

106. PLANNING APPEALS

The Planning Control and Conservation Manager informed the Committee that the following two planning appeals had been lodged since the meeting of the Committee held on 24 January 2007:

Appellant	Ann Elizabeth Searle
Address	4 Cross Street, Letchworth
Description	Retention of replacement windows to rear elevation Ref. 06/02145/1LB
Procedure	Written Representations
Appellant	Mr & Mrs Palmer
Address	39 Pasture Road, Letchworth
Description	Outline building application (scale appearance and landscaping reserved) for the erection of 4 detached dwellings following the demolition of existing dwelling and formation of new access. Ref. 06/02032/1
Procedure	Written Representations

The Planning Control and Conservation Manager informed the Committee that the following three planning appeals had been determined since the meeting of the Committee held on 24 January 2007:

Appellant Description	02 (UK) Ltd. Swapping out of an existing 10m high street lamp with a 15m high integrated street lamp and telecommunications column lamppost
Site Reference	Letchworth Gate Junction, Letchworth Gate 06/00627/1TD
Appeal Decision Committee/ Delegated	Dismissed Delegated
Comments	The Inspector supported the Council's Case in dismissing this appeal. He felt that this development would be visually obtrusive and harmful to the character of this site. He also considered that the applicant had not paid enough attention to the possibility of mast sharing with other operators to minimize street clutter.
Appellant Description	T-Mobile Replacement of existing lighting column with a 10.06m high dual purpose telecommunication lamp post with 3 no. antennae underneath a luminary arm. Installation of 3 no. radio equipment cabinets and ancillary development on grass verge.
Site Reference	Lamppost no. 240, Hitchin Road, Letchworth 06/01037/1
Appeal Decision Committee/ Delegated	Allowed and Planning Permission Granted Committee Favourable Recommendation from Officer
Comments	The Inspector concluded that the column would not harm the character of the conservation area or lead to an unacceptably cluttered street scene, on a busy through route. Sufficient evidence was presented to justify the coverage on this site.
Appellant Description	Mr C. Wheatcroft Two storey extension to create additional 3 bedroom dwelling
Site Reference	25 Caslon Way, Letchworth 06/00758/1
Appeal Decision Committee/ Delegated	Allowed Committee
Comments	The Inspector considered that whilst highway safety is an important matter, there was no clear evidence to suggest that the parking arising from the development would exacerbate the existing situation to such an extent to create highway safety problems.

107. CHAMPION NEWS

The Head of Community Development & Cultural Services presented a report to the Committee, which set out the activities undertaken by the Community Development Officer for Letchworth Garden City since the meeting of the Committee held on 24

January 2007, and brought to Members' attention some important community based activities that would be taking place during the next few months.

The Head of Community Development & Cultural Services stated that there was nothing to add to the report, but welcomed question on the report from the Committee.

The Chairman updated the Committee on the work due to take place at the Outdoor Swimming Pool in Letchworth Garden City. He stated that following meetings with Stevenage Leisure Ltd and other Leisure Specialists the Contracts and Project Manager – Leisure had drawn up a plan of work as follows:

- To reduce the bin area by 50% which will enable a larger space next to the small pool;
- Place banners along the wall which will be removable to enable the staff to put away at night, the banners will be designed to create a family/children area, therefore providing a softer back drop to the pool;
- Around the small pool no-slip outdoor rubber surfacing will be laid, which will freshen up the area and ensure a safe environment for children to play;
- A water feature will be added to the small pool;
- Any remaining money, once the works have been completed, will be spent on the purchase of palm trees that will be located at the entrance to the facility on the upper level.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Head of Community Development & Cultural Services investigate possible solutions to anti-social behavior as a result of alcohol and drug abuse on the Grange Estate.
2. That the actions taken by the Community Development Officer to promote greater community capacity and well – being for the Letchworth Garden City community be endorsed

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To keep Members of the Committee apprised of the latest developments in community activities in Letchworth Garden City.

108. LETCHWORTH COMMITTEE DEVELOPMENT & AREA VISIONING BUDGET 2006/2007

The Head of Community Development & Cultural Services presented a report to the Committee, which set out the current expenditure and balances of the Area Committee delegated budgets. He also brought to the Committee's attention details of recent requests received for Area Committee Development Discretionary Grant Funding made by community groups and local organizations.

The Head of Community Development & Cultural Services stated that there was a typing error in the report and paragraph 4.4 should read 'Pixmore Way' rather than 'Pixmore Avenue'.

The Head of Community Development & Cultural Services stated that there was nothing to add to the report, but welcomed question on the report from the Committee.

When questioned the Head of Community Development and Cultural Services confirmed that the dog waste bin mentioned in item 3 of paragraph 4.6 of the report will be within Letchworth Garden City and not Hitchin.

The Chairman confirmed to the Committee that the allotment site mentioned in item 11 of paragraph 4.6 is in Flint Road and went on to clarify the circumstances surrounding the creation of 3 new plots.

RESOLVED:

1. That the budgetary expenditure, balances and carry forwards from the Development Budgets and the allocated Visioning Budgets be noted;
2. That the Committee agree an allocation 'in principle' of £5,175 from the 2007/08 budget to enable Letchworth Outdoor Pool to extend its opening hours;
3. That the following grants be awarded:

Suggestion	Amount recommended	Budget
1. Replace damaged bench on South View.	£400	Discretionary budget
2. Replace worn out bench on Spring Road (Hitchin road end)	£400	Discretionary budget
3. Installation of dog waste bin on Willian Road, equidistant between Letchworth Lane and the 4 X 4 Garage near Hitchin	£450 plus annual revenue implication of £70 per year	Discretionary budget
4. Revenue funding for youth initiatives at the Spring Road Scout Hut.	£5,000	Revenue Visioning
5. Underpass mural on the Jackmans estate	£3,500	Small Area Grants – 737 Jackmans budget - 2828
6. Jackmans Community Garden	£5,000	Discretionary – 2688 Small Area Grants - 2312
7. Contribution towards capital works associated with the improvement of the Rushby Mead Scout base	£5,000	Discretionary budget
8. Allocation of funds to make the old Jackmans Library into a temporary base for parent and child groups in the day and youth groups in the evening	£7,000	Revenue Visioning – 6263 Small Area Grants - 737
9. Contribution of funds for winter festival activities	£2,500	Small Area Grants
10. Allocation of funds to Letchworth Arts Centre to enable them to 'unlock' WREN funding.	£3,850 (amount to then be deducted from 07/08 award)	Discretionary budget – 1920 Town Centre Budget - 1930
11. Funds to create 3 new plots on the Norton Rd Allotments	£500 £100	Discretionary Budget Small Area Grants

4. That the Head of Community Development & Cultural Services be requested to investigate where £3,000 may come from for the replacement of dead or damaged trees in Broadway Gardens, Letchworth Garden City.

REASONS FOR DECISIONS: The allocation of funds will improve the services provided by local organizations and groups that are available and accessed by members of the community.

109. GRANT APPLICATION – NORTON BOWLS CLUB

RESOLVED: That the sum of £1,000.00 be awarded to the Norton Bowls Club as a financial contribution towards the refurbishment of the kitchen area in the current clubhouse. Hopefully completing works in time for the Club's centenary year celebrations in 2008.

REASON FOR DECISION: The awarding of financial assistance to voluntary organisations and the use of discretionary spending allows the Committee to further the aims and strategic priorities of the Council.

The meeting closed at 8.55 p.m.

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Chairman